



RE: HB 4391 & 4392  
DATE: April 21, 2015

The Michigan Environmental Council (MEC), a coalition of more than 65 member-based organizations across the state, would like to put forward its support for House Bills 4391 and 4392, which raise pesticide registration fees to allow the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to successfully fulfill its legislative charges going forward.

The Department has proposed raising the pesticide registration from \$40 per product to \$100 per product registered. This addresses a need in the Department, as they have seen staff levels decline greatly since the early 2000s. This decline in staff levels has diminished the Department's ability to effectively carry out the tasks it has been assigned by this legislature, including serving the industry it is tasked to oversee with these fees.

### **School and Daycare Inspections**

One of these tasks is the inspection of schools and daycares for pesticide use. Over the years, MEC has worked to minimize the exposure of Michigan residents, especially children, to pesticides, a harmful class of chemicals that have been linked in scientific studies to a wide range of negative health effects.

In 2003, we joined with the Michigan State Council of Junior Leagues and then-State Representative Ed Gaffney to pass legislation establishing a process by which parents are notified of their right to be notified by schools and daycare centers prior to the application of pesticides, and ensuring the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programs by schools and daycares. The goals of Public Act 24 of 2004 (HB 5154) then and now are to:

- Ensure that clear and accurate notification concerning the use of pesticides in schools and daycare centers be made available to parents prior to application;
- Prevent unnecessary exposure of children to chemical pesticides and provide the healthiest learning environment, playgrounds, and playing fields possible; and
- Provide safer alternatives to chemical pesticides while preventing economic and health damage caused by pests.

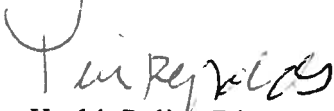
The bill passed with near unanimous support in both the House and the Senate. It is unfortunate that the Department has inadequate resources to enforce the law. It's our understanding that last year, with the support of funding from the EPA, the Department inspected roughly 33 schools and found only 6 in compliance with the law. The other 27 inspections led to a wide range of violations from improperly licensed applicators to a

## SUMMARY

MEC and our members support the Department and the request for raising pesticide fees and applying them equally to out-of-state companies that do business in Michigan.

Sincerely,

Tina Reynolds



Health Policy Director

Sean Hammond



Deputy Policy Director